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Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions

Letter dated 2 November 2006 from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women

This year's substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, held in the follow-up phase of the 2005 World Summit, had an intense focus on implementing the United Nations development agenda — that is, the development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, agreed at United Nations conferences and summits — and on realizing the global partnership for development.

The Ministerial Declaration on Employment Generation and Decent Work for All identified a number of specific steps aimed at furthering the implementation of the World Summit commitment to make the goal of full and productive employment a central objective of national and international policies. It called for the development of 10-year action plans and assigned the Council a role in monitoring progress on the implementation of the Declaration. This should give new impetus to our implementation efforts.

The theme of the coordination segment was very pertinent to the ongoing efforts to implement the United Nations development agenda. The question of translating economic growth into social development, including eradication of poverty and hunger, remains central to the success of those efforts. The deliberations showed that we do not have definitive answers and the Council asked the United Nations system to study the question further.

The operational activities segment was of special significance this year. For the first time, the Council launched the triennial review of funding for development cooperation. The resolution demonstrated that the Council was committed to play its oversight and guiding role by providing detailed guidance to the United Nations

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development system to improve its functioning at the country level, as well as guidance to the Secretariat to better undertake its assessment and analytical work. This is significant for both the operational and the normative sides of the United Nations.

During the humanitarian affairs segment, the Council discussed two of the most crucial issues in humanitarian emergencies, namely gender-based violence and chronically underfunded emergencies.

I should like to reflect on some of the important proposals made by the Council concerning the functional commissions. A list of the resolutions adopted by the Council specifically calling for action by the functional commissions is attached to this letter for your reference (see annex).

Among them, I should like to draw your particular attention to Council resolution 2006/44 on the role of the Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcome of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits. In that resolution, the Council welcomed the progress made in the review of their working methods by several functional commissions and subsidiary bodies of the Council during their 2006 sessions, and invited those functional commissions and other relevant subsidiary bodies that had not yet done so to continue to examine their methods of work, and to submit their reports to the Council with the aim of concluding the review of their working methods by 2007; invited the functional commissions that had not yet done so to work towards strengthening their cooperation with the regional commissions, as well as relevant funds and programmes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies; and decided to replace the individual joint bureaux meetings with one meeting of the chairs of the functional commissions and the Council to be held at the beginning of each calendar year, making use of teleconferencing whenever possible.

I would greatly appreciate it if the issues raised above could be brought to the attention of your functional commission for consideration and action. I thank you for your active and continued collaboration.

In view of the ongoing discussion on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, the Council is expected to assume some new tasks, such as the annual ministerial-level reviews and the biennial Development Cooperation Forum, as well as to revitalize its existing activities. These will place the Council at the centre of efforts to monitor and advance implementation of the development agenda, in a unified and coherent way. A major challenge for the Council and the functional commissions will be helping to operationalize these new functions. I hope that you will devote part of your sessions in 2007 to consideration of this question. I hope that the anticipated changes will lead to further strengthening of the interaction among the functional commissions and the Council and to a more effective role of the Council's family in working towards the common objective of carrying out the United Nations development agenda.

(*Signed*) Ali **Hachani**

Annex

Resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council in 2006 requesting follow-up

A. Resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council in 2006 requesting follow-up by all the functional commissions

Resolution number	*Title*
2006/44	Role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits, in the light of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B

B. Resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council in 2006 requesting follow-up by the Commission on the Status of Women

Resolution number	*Title*
2006/8	Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women
2006/9	Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women

C. Resolutions calling for action by all relevant entities of the United Nations system

Resolution number	*Title*
2006/7	Situation of women and girls in Afghanistan
2006/36	Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system